

Developing Prairie Clover (*Dalea* spp.) for Use in Burn Rehab Seed Mixtures in Southwestern Pinyon/Juniper Communities

2006 Accomplishments

Prairie clovers (*Dalea* spp.) are highly preferred browse plants, fix nitrogen in the soil, and produce abundant seed. Thus, they are potentially valuable rehabilitation plants in Southwestern plant communities.

Foxtail prairie clover (*Dalea leporina*) seeds were collected from the field and taken to the NRCS Plant Materials Center in Los Lunas, New Mexico for testing. Tests included:

- Seed germination and scarification treatments
- Field trials using plug seedlings
- Direct seeding into flats
- Vegetative growth optimization

Seed germination was equal with hot water pretreatment and percussion scarification. Both methods produced about 55 percent germination. Seedlings were then grown in plugs for transplant to field plots. Survival of transplanted plugs was low so experiments with direct seeding into flats were done to determine a potentially successful direct seeding technique. Various soil mixtures and fertilizer applications were used to determine what conditions produce optimum vegetative growth.

Tests of seed yield will be conducted in the fall when these plants normally flower and fruit. Further refinement of cultivation techniques will be carried out during the second year of this project.



Foxtail prairie clover plants in the field 70 days after planting plug seedlings.



Direct-sown foxtail prairie clover plants in nursery bed 46 days after seeding.

Year Awarded: 2006

Project completion: 2007

Report number: 1 of 2

Expenditures:

- FY06 funding \$25,329, expend. \$7,857; \$17471 remaining

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